

## - Child development

# Getting your children active is a lifetime gift!

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Did you know that four out of five children in the Republic of Ireland are still not getting enough exercise, posing serious risks to their health and wellbeing?

We know that the effects of inactivity are frightening but there is no doubt that regular physical activity has huge physical and mental benefits for our younger generation.

The benefits of being active for physical and mental health are huge. Being active helps release chemicals in your brain (endorphins), which have a positive effect on your mood, not to mention the benefits to your heart, lungs, muscles and bones. Getting out and being active is also a great way to manage stress.

### 10 HEALTH BENEFITS

- Physical activity helps a child to...
- Improve agility, balance and co-ordination.
- Feel more energised - endorphins are released into their bloodstream during activity.
- Feel happier, by reducing feelings of stress, anxiety and depression.
- Burn and generate more energy.
- Improve their physical and mental wellbeing.
- Maintain healthy weight.

Prevents sickness and illness because physical activity can help build a healthy heart, develop strong muscles and bones and may help reduce the risk of some chronic diseases that may occur in later life.

- Improve concentration.
- Improve self-esteem and helps them feel good about themselves and develop friendships.

### BENEFITS FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

The benefits of getting active can be even greater for children with a disability. It can give them a good opportunity to make new friends, get fitter, stronger and healthier as well as learning a new skill and having fun.

After all our sporting success at recent events such as Paralympic Games and the Special Olympics, now is a good time to think about getting your child involved in physical activity. For more information go to [www.healthpromotion.ie](http://www.healthpromotion.ie)